High Quality Child Care Checklist For Parents

Licensing & Regulations | Notes

What is the program's license number? Look up the license http://checkccmd.org/	
Is the program participating in Maryland EXCELS?	

Health & Safety | Notes

Is there a secure entrance? What are the check-in and check-out procedures?	
Is the environment clean?	
Are handwashing and sanitizing procedures happening?	
What is the illness policy?	
What are the emergency procedures?	

Loving & Professional Teachers & Staff | Notes

Are there consistent teachers and staff?	
Do teachers interact in a caring, loving, and respectful way?	
Does it seem like the children are happy and having their needs met?	
Do you feel welcome and accepted in the environment?	

Discipline | Notes

What is the discipline/behavior policy?	
How do they manage behaviors/emotions that are challenging?	
Is there a space for children to calm down when upset?	

Schedule | Notes

Is there a daily schedule? Is it posted? Are there designated times for stories, activities, nap, meals, etc.?	
Is there a balance of inside and outside play?	
Are infant and toddler schedules individualized to meet their needs?	

Toys and Learning Materials | Notes

Are there plenty of books? Are teachers reading to children?	
Are there enough toys for all children? Would the toys interest your child?	
Is there limited technology and screen time?	

Outdoor Space | Notes

Is there an outdoor play space?	
Are the teachers supervising the children?	

Communication & Family Resources | Notes

Are there any currently enrolled families you can speak to about the program?	
Are there opportunities for daily communication between parents and teachers?	
What resources are shared with families? Where are they located?	
Are there ways for parents to be involved in the program?	

Proper Staff/Child Ratios

Family Child Care	1 Staff to 8 Children (only 2 under 2)		Maximum Group Size = 8
Large Family Child Care	2 Staff to 12 Children (only 3 under 2)		Maximum Group Size = 12
Child Care Center	Infants	1 Staff to 3 Children	Maximum Group Size = 6
	Toddlers	1 Staff to 3 Children	Maximum Group Size = 9
	2's	1 Staff to 6 Children	Maximum Group Size = 12
	3's and 4's	1 Staff to 10	Maximum Group Size = 20
	5's and Older	1 Staff to 15	Maximum Group Size = 30

A Parent's Guide To High Quality Child Care

How To Begin Looking For High Quality Child Care

☑ Contact Child Care LOCATE to create a list of child care programs that meet your needs by calling **1-877-261-0060**.

☑ Look on Maryland EXCELS for programs in your area that are high quality and accept child care scholarships (vouchers) at http://marylandexcels.org/directory/ .

☑ If you need help paying for child care, visit the Child Care Scholarship Program at https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program .

☑ Make a list of programs that you would like to visit. Look up the programs on Check Child Care Maryland at http://checkccmd.org/ .

☑ Call programs to ask if they have an open space for the age of your child and set up tours and interviews.

☑ Pick the program that is the best fit for your family. If you have additional questions or would like more support, call your local Child Care Resource and Referral Center. The CCRC for Howard County can be reached at **410-313-1940**.

Special Considerations To Keep In Mind When You Have A Child With Special Needs

Know your rights!	
Ensure the program you chose is willing and able to work with all children regardless of their needs, abilities, and limitations.	
Consider giving the program a copy of your child's IEP/IFSP if they have one.	
Check the programs policy in regards to allowing specialists into the program to work with your child (such as speech, physical, and occupational therapists).	
Ask how the program manages changes to the environment, expectations, and the daily schedule to accommodate children with special needs?	
Does the environment meet the needs of your child? Are all areas and materials accessible?	
Find out if the provider/staff has experience caring for a child with needs similar to yours.	
Ask how children are encouraged to celebrate differences and assist and support each other.	
What supports, resources, and training are available to parents and providers?	

Howard County Office of Children and Families
Department of Community Resources and Services

MARYLAND FAMILY NETWORK
Leading Maryland's Child Care Resource Centers

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

MARYLAND CHILDCARE RESOURCE NETWORK
MARYLAND EXCELS
CHECK FOR QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAMS